

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 02084 241509Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 /069 W
-----250319Z 078467 /63

R 241423Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5388
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: LATEST PORI POLL GIVES ALIGNMENT LARGE LEAD

REF: TEL AVIV 0755

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: THE LATEST PORI POLL, PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S HAARETZ, SHOWS A SHARP GAIN FOR THE ALIGNMENT OVER PORI'S JANUARY POLL, GIVING IT A TWO TO ONE LEAD OVER SECOND-PLACE LIKUD WHICH REGISTERED A SIGNIFICANT DORP. HOWEVER, THE COMBINED UNDECIDED/REFUSE-TO-ANSWER TOTAL CONTINUES AT ABOUT TWO-FIFTHS OF THE SAMPLING.

2. THE POLL WAS TAKEN DURING THE SECOND WEEK OF MARCH AND INCLUDED A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLING OF 1224 ELIGIBLE VOTERS AMONG THE JEWISH POPULATION, BUT EXCLUDED RESIDENTS OF KIBBUTZIM. IT ALSO DID NOT INCLUDE ARABS OR DATA FOR RAKAH AND THE MINORITY LISTS. THE RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES WERE AS FOLLOWS, WITH PORI'S JANUARY FIGURES IN PARENTHESES: ALIGNMENT--29.7 (21.8);
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LIKUD--14.9 (19.2); DMC--8.7 (11.2); NRP--2.9 (5.0);
TORAH FRONT--1.1 (1.3); SHLOMZION--1.3 (1.8); ILP--0.2 (0.8); CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT--0.4 (0.2); MOKED--0.2 (0.2); ALL OTHERS--0.7 (0.2); UNDECIDED--22.7 (26.5);
ABSTENTIONS--17.2 (11.8).

3. PORI NOTES THAT AMONG PREVIOUSLY UNDECIDED

VOTERS WHO VOTED FOR THE ALIGNMENT IN PAST ELECTIONS, SUPPORT FOR THE ALIGNMENT HAD INCREASED FOLLOWING RABIN'S VICTORY OVER PERES IN THE PREMIERSHIP RACE. THE ARTICLE POINTS OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THE GAIN MAY OWE SOMETHING TO THE FACT THAT THE SURVEY WAS TAKEN THE WEEK OF RABIN'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND BEFORE CONTROVERSY DEVELOPED OVER THE MEANING OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENTS ON BORDERS AND PALESTINIANS. ACCORDING TO PORI, THOSE DISAPPOINTED WITH THE CHOICE OF RABIN TO HEAD THE ALIGNMENT HAVE NOT YET DECIDED FOR WHOM THEY WILL VOTE. END UNCLASSIFIED

4. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE: COMMENT: THIS POLL INDICATES THAT ALTHOUGH PERES MAY HAVE BEEN SLIGHTLY MORE POPULAR THAN RABIN AMONG THE GENERAL ELECTORATE (AS REFLECTED IN PREVIOUS POLLS) RABIN'S RENOMINATION CERTAINLY HAS NOT HURT THE ALIGNMENT. DESPITE PORI'S GENERALLY GOOD REPUTATION, WE ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE STRONG SHOWING OF THE ALIGNMENT (NEARLY 50 PERCENT OF THOSE EXPRESSING A PREFERENCE) AND ITS SUDDEN HUGE LEAD OVER THE LIKUD--IT JUST DOES NOT SQUARE WITH WHAT MOST OBSERVERS, INCLUDING ALIGNMENT SOURCES, ARE SAYING. DUNNIGAN

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